

INDIANA LAKE MICHIGAN COASTAL PROGRAM

SHORELINES

Newsletter for Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program

Volume 3 2001

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Great Lakes Coastal Restoration Grants

A new program to encourage local projects to protect and restore natural resources in the Great Lakes will soon be available in Indiana. State and local organizations will be able to work together to develop projects in Northwest Indiana's coastal region such as stream restoration, reducing the impacts of polluted runoff, wetland restoration, natural area restoration, and establishing buffers or greenways along rivers and streams.

The Commerce, Justice, and State Committee Appropriations Bill H.R. 4942 (House Report 106-1005) from the 106th Congress included a one-time appropriation of \$30,000,000 for the restoration of coastal natural resources for the Great Lakes states. The bill specified that the appropriation should be used as matching, competitive grants to encourage state and local partnerships for the restoration of coastal resources. Restoration projects discussed by the bill include contaminated site cleanup, storm water management, wetland restoration, protection of greenways and buffers, and other projects designed to control polluted runoff and protect and restore coastal natural resources. The bill

also directs the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to develop an implementation plan for the new initiative. NOAA will pass-through the appropriation to states through the Coastal Zone Management Program.

The NOAA has been working with the Great Lakes states during the development of final grant guidance. To meet the intent of the CJS Committee, NOAA will work with states to administer competitive grants for community-based coastal restoration activities. For states with Coastal Zone Management Programs, the allocation will be integrated into their annual grant program. For Indiana and Illinois, who do not currently have approved Coastal Zone Management Programs, a separate award will be required. States were asked to apply for the appropriation by July 1, 2001. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources, through the Lake Michigan Coastal Program has submitted its application. Although the final guidance has not been release yet, NOAA plans to give each state a minimum of \$1,750,000 and a maximum of \$7,000,000.

Great Lakes Coastal Restoration Funding By State

Illinois	\$1,750,000
Indiana	\$1,750,000
Michigan	\$7,000,000
Minnesota	\$1,938,000
New York	\$4,727,000
Ohio	\$4,489,000
Pennsylvania	\$1,846,000
Wisconsin	\$5,686,000
NOAA/NOS Administration (2.5%)	\$748,000

TOTALS
\$29,934,000 (after congressional
recision)

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The Indiana Department of Natural Resources will establish a competitive grants program through the Lake Michigan Coastal Program to distribute grant funds. State and local public organizations and agencies will be eligible to apply. The eligibility of non-profit organizations will be determined upon release of final guidance from NOAA. However, approximately 50% of the grant funds will go to

local applicants. The use of partnerships will also be emphasized to encourage local support for projects.

More detailed guidance for Indiana's grant program will be developed following the release of final guidance from NOAA. Public input will be an important component in the refinement of the state's grant program. The Lake Michigan Coastal Program

also plans to hold workshops to inform eligible applicants of the grant and assist with the application process. Although this is a one-time appropriation, the grant funds can be used to initiate many community based projects that will improve natural resources and water quality in Indiana's coastal region.

Lake Michigan Coastal Program Development Scoping Process

On June 26th, 27th, and 28th, public meetings were held in Northwest Indiana on the Lake Michigan Coastal Program Scoping Document. The evening meetings were held in Michigan City, Highland, and Portage and attracted many interested citizens.

The meetings were part of a process to gain public input into the development of an Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program and the State's participation in the national Coastal Zone Management Program. There are currently 33 states and territories that participate in the national coastal program, which focuses on balancing the economic prosperity and environmental health of the nation's coasts and Great Lakes ecosystem. Indiana's participation will provide annual funding to form partnerships between state and local agencies and organizations to address local priorities for Indiana's coastal region.

The current budget proposal for the congressional appropriation to coastal states would make Indiana eligible to receive approximately \$900,000 annually to implement the Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program. The amount Indiana will receive is based on the amount

Congress appropriates to the Coastal Zone Management Program and a standard formula. The budget appropriated is distributed to states and territories participating in the coastal program based on the number of miles of shoreline and the population within their program boundary.

The Scoping Document outlines the program organization and priorities for the Lake Michigan Coastal Program and Indiana's existing management authorities that together meet the requirements to participate in the Coastal Zone Management Program. Priorities for the program were identified with the help of public input from the Northwest Indiana Public Workgroups and the Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel. Comments received during the scoping process will add to the development of an Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program that addresses local priorities.

Prior to the June Scoping meetings, the Department of Natural Resources worked to inform as many local communities as possible about the scoping process for the Lake Michigan Coastal Program. In addition to announcing the public meetings in 13 area newspapers, presentations and meetings were held for over 40 com-

munity representatives and organizations. These included Chambers of Commerce, businesses, local agencies, Park Departments, and several community groups.

The public meetings for the Lake Michigan Coastal Program Scoping Document were very successful. Approximately 90 people attended the three meetings with many contributing comments during the meeting. In addition, by August 6th, the Department of Natural Resources had received over 50 comments by mail, e-mail, and during the public meetings. Over 300 Scoping Documents were distributed during the meetings and by mail to local, state, and federal agencies, local organizations, and libraries.

The level of participation has not only provided valuable comments for inclusion in the program development process, but has also identified several important stakeholders interested in continuing to be involved in the Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program. Stakeholders have raised issues such as the need for public access enhancement, downtown and waterfront revitalization, storm water management and planning, interest in increasing public education and outreach initiatives, and improving water quality.

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Comments postmarked by August 6th, and as feasible, those comments received shortly thereafter, were considered and responses were written. The comments, responses, and changes to the Scoping Document based on public comment will be incorporated into a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Lake Michigan Coastal Program. The Draft EIS will then be released

for public comment in September. Additional public meetings are scheduled for October. Public comments on the Draft EIS will be recorded at the meetings and there will be an additional period for submission of comments.

Public participation during the development of the Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program is an integral part of

the process. If you have any questions or would like additional information, you may contact Laurie Rounds toll free at 1-877-928-3755 or leave a request for information toll free at 1-866-500-7010.

Public Meetings Planned for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

As part of a continuing effort to provide opportunities for public participation and input in the development of the Lake Michigan Coastal Program, DNR will host three public meetings on October 1st, 3rd, and 4th in northwest Indiana.

These public meetings will be held to hear comments on the Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (P/DEIS). The meetings will be held at the following locations:

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|-------------|---|
| October 1st | Holiday Inn
5280 S. Franklin St
Michigan City, IN
7:00 to 9:00 p.m. |
| October 3rd | Wicker Park
8554 Indianapolis Blvd
Highland, IN
7:00 to 9:00 p.m. |
| October 4th | Portage Yacht Club
1370 S.R. 249
Portage, IN
7:00 to 9:00 p.m. |

The P/DEIS is actually a combination of Indiana's coastal program document and a DEIS that is prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. The coastal program document describes the organization and goals for the Lake Michigan Coastal Program and how

Indiana meets the requirements to participate in the Coastal Zone Management Program. The DEIS provides information about the potential environmental impacts of proposed actions and the alternatives involved in the approval of the Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program by the federal Coastal Zone Management Program.

The P/DEIS will be developed from the scoping document and public comments received during the scoping process. Public involvement and input will continue to assist the DNR in making the Lake Michigan Coastal Program a locally driven program to protect, restore, and responsibly develop the coastal resources of Indiana's Lake Michigan region.

Upon release of the P/DEIS, there will be a 45-day comment period for federal, state, and local agencies, local organizations, and the general public. Comments on the P/DEIS will be accepted via mail, phone, fax, and e-mail:

Laurie Rounds
Attn: Lake Michigan Coastal Program Comments
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
402 West Washington Street; Room W264
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Toll Free: 1-866-500-7010
Fax: 1-800-917-7490
E-mail: coastal@dnr.state.in.us

It is anticipated that the P/DEIS will be released by September 19, 2001. It will be mailed to persons that have requested to be included on the mailing list. The P/DEIS will also be made available at local libraries and on the Internet at <http://www.in.gov/dnr/lakemich/>. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please leave your name and mailing address on message system at the toll free phone number above or you can mail or fax your request.

Following the public comment period on the P/DEIS, the final program document and environmental impact statement will be prepared and distributed to the public. The final program document and EIS will reflect consideration of all comments received on the P/DEIS. It will also identify the final decision by the State of Indiana and the federal Coastal Zone Management Program concerning approval of the Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program.

Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program newsletter, "Shorelines", is a publication intended to provide information on issues that affect the Lake Michigan coastal region. Suggestions are welcome and can be submitted to:
coastal@dnr.state.in.us
or call 1-877-WATER55 (1-877-928-3755)

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